

Iran's Dual Political Voice—Part Three

Does Iran's governing framework and prevailing religious ideology create mixed political messages for the West? Why is the Iranian leadership fixed on the notion of nuclear development and the eventual acquiring of a nuclear weapon? Is there reason to believe that Iran will use its growing Eurasian alliances to influence geopolitical outcomes in the Middle East? Does the Bible give us a future perspective for the people of Iran?

The nations of Eurasia are diverse in their histories, cultures and traditions, and the many peoples of this vast geopolitical landscape are capable, enterprising and inventive, with the potential to forge out a better world for themselves and for other nations beyond Eurasia. The question at hand is whether or not the current political and economic ambitions of these peoples and nations will lead to the prosperity, dignity, security and peace that they seek, and whether or not their efforts to harness their collective powers will make for that better world.

Of course, this is a question intrinsically related to the paradox of human nature--a nature that is both good and bad, and one that decides for itself what is right

and wrong--and this paradox of human nature is often expressed in the same way in the behavior of nations. Something that must be understood when dealing with international relations, because it tells us a lot about how nations cooperate one with the other--for good or for bad--and whether or not nations can find the right values that allow them to work together to solve their many problems.

This quest for values, solutions and cooperation has led people to create and nations to accept the many "-isms" that we have today, that is to say socialism, capitalism, Marxism, egalitarianism and communism to name just a few, each reflecting the paradox of human nature and the nature of nations.

Nevertheless, despite this obvious paradox among nations, and the serious differences in political regimes that exist today, the nations of Iran, China, India and Russia have the ability, along with other collaborative nations, to consolidate and harmonize their geopolitical strategies. Not necessarily as a matter of blending many common cultural and historical interests, but rather as a group of nations that believe in their own political philosophies, and also feel they have a common threat or competitor in the United States and NATO. With the threat being perceived not strictly in the military sense, but rather a perceived threat that comes

from a feeling of uncertainty and instability as a result of the West's decline--politically, economically and morally--in a way that tends to engender conspiracy theories and foster worrisome trends among the nations and peoples of Eurasia.

Meaning that Western nations should take note of their political immaturities, and consider their own moral standards, and learn to walk more circumspectly when dealing with a growing Eurasian union. Because the fears created by Western decline, whether they are tangible or simply created in the imagination, play an important role in international affairs, and it often acts as a common mover of foreign policy.

Consequently, if there is a common perception that the West is in decline, then these four nations may well seek to walk with one step economically--along with other nations globally--while working together to project and display military and political power to "protect" their sovereignty and independence from the uncertain results of a declining West.

This would, of course, create greater discord between the West and the East, and also create vulnerabilities in Middle East States as the Belt and Road Initiative moves ever closer to the Levant and Israel.

Giving then Iran's brash rhetoric toward Israel the potential to have grave consequences in the future--not necessarily or strictly through proxy wars or terrorism--but through the position that Iran gains as a

strategic partner in the SCO, BRICS and a greater Eurasian sphere. Noting that Iran's participation in the Belt and Road Initiative could allow Iran to project its political will to the fringe of the Middle East--to the edge of the most volatile "shatterbelt"--and this would force Israel to genuinely expect confrontations with Iran and more importantly with a greater Eurasia. (Some consider Mackinder's "Heartland theory," and Spykman's "Rimland theory" to be outdated, but given the recent views of China and Russia, these schools of thought are apparently moving front and center in Eurasian geopolitics today.)

Creating a situation where Iran's strategic relationship with Eurasia and its dual political voice--a religiopolitical voice with imperialistic notions--may well bring Iran and the Eurasian nations to step their feet into the stream of biblical prophecy by how they might choose to interact with Israel. And that place in the stream is where a nation or nations politically act to block the fulfillment of the promises made to Abraham regarding Israel's future in the Middle East and the promised intervention of Jesus in the coming establishment of the kingdom of God (Rom. 4:13-17; Gal. 3:14; Rev. 21:1-8).

For the Apostle Paul tells us that the promises given to Abraham, of an eventual perpetual inheritance through Jesus, are the same promises afforded to other nations outside of the commonwealth of Israel--through this same Jesus. This we glean from

Paul when he wrote, "and the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed" (Gal. 3:8).

Meaning that the coming kingdom of God is a geopolitical reality as it is addressed in the Bible--as spoken of by Jesus--and that reality ought to be a red flag for all nations of the world that may find themselves focusing and intervening on the political issues of Israel and the city of Jerusalem.

Even Jesus himself addressed a future time when God would send him to intervene in world affairs beginning at Jerusalem, and the consequence of that intervention would fall on all those who would politically and militarily involve themselves in the affairs of Israel. In this context, we find Luke conveying the words of Jesus when he wrote, "and when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh. Then let them which are in Judaea flee to the mountains; and let them which are in the midst of it depart out; and let not them that are in the countries enter thereinto. For these be the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled (Lk. 21:20-22).

Of course, all things that are written were not fulfilled in the days of the Roman Empire.

Which brings us to a politically relative paradox found within religion--who determines what is good and bad, and who is

right and who is wrong--and the supposed belief that three distinct faiths have their roots in the biblical person of Abraham. A belief that actually has no foundation in reality, even though the phrase "Abrahamic religions" is commonly bantered about in the media and other public forums, but it is nonetheless not true that Abraham was the starting point for three divergent monotheistic religions--Islam, Judaism and Christianity.

What we really have are three religions, among others, that claim to be monotheistic, and we have the Jewish people and some in the Arab world who believe that Abraham is their forefather, while many Christians see him as the forefather of Jesus, who is at the center of the promises made to Abraham (Gal. 3:29).

Leaving us to make this point about the traditional religions of Judaism, Islam and Christianity.

Not one of these traditional religions is in complete agreement with the other, and in many ways not one of these religions would be in complete agreement with Abraham.

Clearly, then, in this context, we can confidently say that generally speaking Islam is not in agreement with Christianity, and the Bible is not in agreement with the Qu'ran, and therefore it is unlikely that Iran, under the current political direction of its constitutional structure, will ever acknowledge the warnings and admonitions of prophecy contained within the Bible.

So, with this in mind, we need to consider the significance of Iran having a projection of power alongside China, Russia and India.

Because such an alliance could form a cohesive economic and military reality--forged in fire--with four political pillars that interconnect within a colossal Eurasian structure, already in the making, and expanding. Or, to borrow a metaphor, Iran's growing ties with these nations is like forming a diverse political entity that is now attempting to stand on all four legs--with three legs of iron and one of clay--noting that of these four nations one is yet to acquire a nuclear weapon, with the capability of launching it at will. (Iran, Russia and China have already conducted joint naval exercises in the Gulf of Oman).

This may explain, in part, why Iran continues to seek and acquire the use and eventual deployment capability of nuclear weapons. Because such a capability would assure the security of Iran's regime--in the minds of the current Iranian leadership--while seemingly legitimizing Islam as a guide to State governance, while also allowing Iran takes its place as a key player in a greater Eurasian union.

A Eurasian union that is currently adopting a council or federation of nations concept that may at some time in their development call for the formation of a representative council of governance that would direct the voices of all the nations

within the sphere of a greater Eurasia.

Dwarfing in political scope the current NATO configuration of thirty-one nations, or the collective twenty-two States of the Arab League, or the African Union with fifty-five States, and also the twenty-seven member States of the European Union.

Bringing us then to another factor that may help us understand Iran's quest to become a nuclear power, one that is embedded in a belief system about what it is that protects Muslim social justice from outside interference, and grants respect and dignity to a nation.

Simply, the acquisition of nuclear power and possibly weapons is proposed to be necessary to protect national identity--a Muslim identity--which Iran feels has long been subject to outside political and economic forces.

A conclusion that is not without some merit given the history of Iran.

For if we review the history of Iran, we see that for much of the modern era the country of Iran was not a major player in the world. Noting that for decades Iran was unsuccessful in throwing off British and Russian hegemony in Central Asia in the 19th century, and later this same issue of political interference was complicated by the United States involvement in the political overthrow of Iranian Prime Minister Muhammad Mosaddeq. (Declassified documents released in 2017 revealed the role of the Central

Intelligence Agency in the 1953 coup that brought down Muhammad Mosaddeq.)

These historical events, along with the Iran hostage crisis that began in 1979, created a toxic relationship between the United States and Iran that continues to this day, and in an unfortunate sense these events have fostered the continuation of a political perception in Iran

That is the long-standing idea of conspiracy in politics.

Thus, what we find in the current political rhetoric of Iran is the ever-present sense that there is always some form of conspiracy being plotted against Iran from the West. Noting that conspiracy theories have historically been used in a way to explain the internal and external difficulties Iran has with the West and with its neighboring states in Central Asia. A more recent example being the pushback against the hijab laws by Iranian women, and the government responding by blaming public reactions on the United States instead of themselves, because the perception of the protests by Iranian women appear to have taken the nature of a democratic stance against the current government in Iran.

Consequently, this notion of conspiracies as a way to explain the faults and problems within Iran, seems to have made room for Iran to deny its own problematic role in the Middle East. While being unable to correctly assess the political problems of its own making because of weak social and governmental institutions, and by extension

Iran may be neglecting to analyze whether or not the religion of Islam has played a role in the current political and cultural outcomes of Iran.

Such is the significance of Iran's dual political voice in world affairs.

That is to say one voice used politically in the sense that it appears to represent the voice of the people, and the other voice bringing theocracy front and center with politics as a means to confront Western ideals, including the religion of Christianity.

What then would this mean from a biblical point of view in regard to Iran's dual political voice?

To answer this question, we need to recall again what is at stake for Iran as a Muslim State. That is the legitimizing of Iran's religiopolitical voice by the exporting of Shi'a Islam to the world, and affirming Iran's geopolitical significance as a nuclear power in a greater Eurasian sphere.

The importance being that Iran, even as a Near East hegemon, only has the power to marginally influence political outcomes in the region of the Near and Middle East at this time, and therefore it takes advantage of proxy regimes to shield itself and to further its religiopolitical ambitions in the Middle East.

However, as a future political player on the Western front of a greater Eurasian union, Iran would have a greater capacity to impose itself in the region by

being a link and stepping stone for Eurasian nations to cast their political weight into the Middle East and also North Africa. With the potential--by political action--to provoke a challenge to the promises given to Abraham, and the establishment of the governance of the kingdom of God beginning at Jerusalem. 